

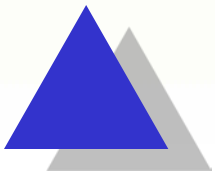


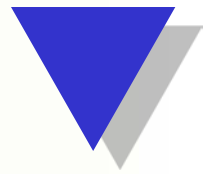
German biosphere reserves put to the test!

Evaluation of existing biosphere reserves
with reference to the UNESECO guidelines,
the requirements of the national biosphere reserve criteria and
the newly developed assessment procedures

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Workshop „Evaluating Management Effectiveness: Future Proofing“
EUROPARC Conference 2009 (Strömstad, Sweden)
September 12, 2009





Introduction

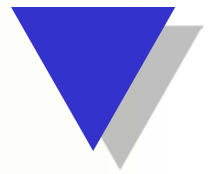
Reasons for this study:

Germans protected areas (National Park, Biosphere Reserves and Nature Parks) were not evaluated.

The UNESCO demands that all biosphere reserves have to implement an evaluation after ten years.

Nearly all German biosphere reserves are older then ten years.

The decision makers try to delay this process.



Aims of this study:

All German biosphere reserves are to be strengthened with the help of an independent evaluation.

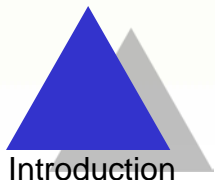
The study presents a standardised, easily manageable but nevertheless comprehensive evaluation strategy for the German biosphere reserves.

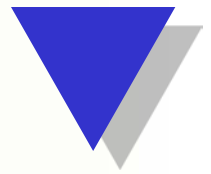
A newly developed assessment procedure addresses all relevant aspects and supplements them with additional higher-ranking evaluation methods and quality criteria.

The evaluation strategy is applicable to other biosphere reserves worldwide.

The experiences supports the creation of new biosphere reserves.

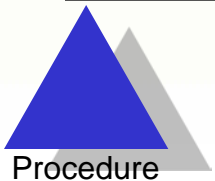
Germany can demonstrate that the development of the protected areas is well done.

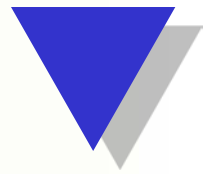




Procedure

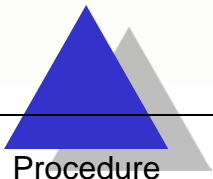
- extensive researches (literature and check out the actual situation)
- exchange of experiences about the evaluation in protected areas in Spain, France, Switzerland and the United States of America
- mailing a questionnaire to selected MAB-National Committees worldwide
- mailing a special questionnaire to all biosphere reserves which have implemented an evaluation
- analyses of the different experiences and procedures of all countries
- transfer and integration of the results into the newly developed assessment procedures

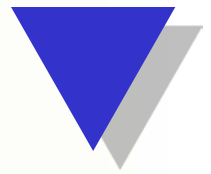




Conceptual framework

<p>Focus 1:</p> <p>UNESCO-guidelines for the biosphere reserves</p> <p>International guidelines from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)</p> <p>Sevilla Strategy</p> <p>Nomination-Form and Periodic Review for UNESCO-Biosphere Reserves</p>	<p>Focus 2:</p> <p>Guidelines for biosphere reserves in Germany</p> <p>Criteria for the recognition and review of biosphere reserves</p>	<p>Focus 3:</p> <p>Reports from other countries worldwide</p> <p>Collecting experiences in evaluation (with the help of several researches, literature, evaluation of projects etc.) and holding talks (IUCN, WWF, UNESCO etc.)</p> <p>Using own knowledge with the help of former studies</p>
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Collecting information

- making different expert discussions in the administration of the biosphere reserve and the ministry (no. 189)
- questioning the superintendent of the biosphere reserve (40 questionnaire)
- making excursions into the protected area (no. 16)
- looking at documents and papers in the administration (no. 16)
- getting information from the tourist office of the region, the forestry, the town hall and employment agency (no. 86)
- questioning citizens (no. 869)



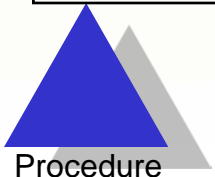
Categories for the evaluation

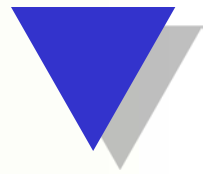
Structural categories:

1. Generally information
2. Area, physical characteristics
3. Anthropogenic activities
4. Representativity
5. Area size
6. Zoning and delimitation of the BR
7. Legal status
8. Administration and organisation
9. Financing
10. Staffing
11. Property relations
12. Planning

Functional categories:

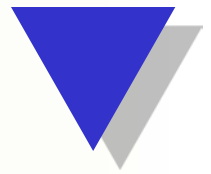
13. Sustainable development
14. Ecological balance of the area and landscape preservation
15. Biodiversity
16. Research
17. Ecological observation
18. Environmental education
19. Public relations and communication
20. Situation of the citizens
21. Future prospects





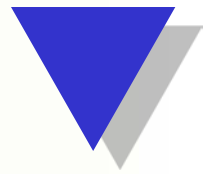
Comparison of the different evaluations

Periodic review of the UNESCO	National biosphere reserve criteria	Newly developed assessment procedures
193 questions	13 exclusion criteria, 29 evaluation criteria	95 structural questions, 130 functional questions
1 point for each good news	maximal 5 points for each evaluation criteria	maximal 4 points for each evaluation question
maximal 193 points are possible	maximal 145 points are possible	maximal 190 points possible



Weighting of the responses to the newly developed assessment procedures

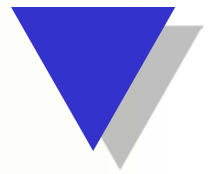
4 points:	criterion fulfilled; very good implementation; good work
2 points:	criterion fulfilled; good measure; less pollution; good implementation; good work
1 point:	criterion not yet fulfilled; implementation is delayed; satisfactory work; medium load
no point:	criterion not fulfilled; implementation has to improve considerable; correction are required; heavy ecological pressure; (more) measures are necessary



Consequences of the evaluation-process

Long-term effects for the biosphere reserves:

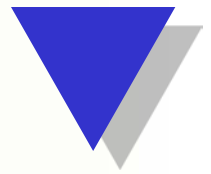
- examination if the three functions of biosphere reserves are fulfilled (see Article 4 of the international guidelines)
- territorial expansion of individual biosphere reserves
- preparation of management plans
- development of better coordination actions
- withdrawing a biosphere reserve
- identification of „two-class“ biosphere reserves (good and bad ones) because of different regulations before and after 1995



Consequences of the evaluation-process

Deficits at the periodic review (UNESCO-Evaluation):

- periodic review consist of questions based on data and characteristic features
- nearly none analysis of the current situation are included
- changes remain ignored
- funding and staffing is missing
- questions about damaging ecosystems are not existing
- no assesment of the activities and no honorarium for the performance is given



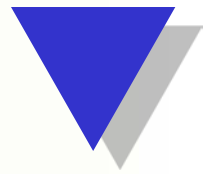
Comparison of the three assessments

Using the periodic review (UNESCO guidelines):

- conditions are checked
- questionnaire is a descriptive form
- in comparison to the nomination form has the periodic review only 9 new sets of questions
- deficits and problems have no weighting

Conclusion:

- ⇒ it is a limited significance of this kind of evaluation
- ⇒ **the German biosphere reserves fulfil the UNESCO guidelines exemplary between 82 to 96%**



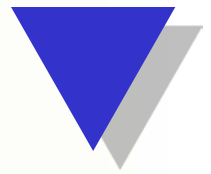
Using the national biosphere reserve criteria for evaluation:

- concrete goals through guidelines and criteria can be used
- national criteria consist of exclusion and assessment criteria
- deprivation of a biosphere reserve is possible when an exclusion criteria is not fulfilled
- assessment criteria use an award for points
- application is voluntary
- criteria are not accepted by all federal states

Conclusion:

- ⇒ it is a rigorous evaluation methodology
- ⇒ the criteria stand for a very high quality of the management-system
- ⇒ **none of the German biosphere reserve fulfil the national biosphere reserve criteria**





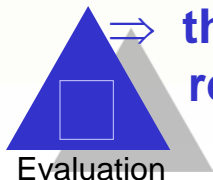
Using the newly developed assessment procedures for evaluation:

- qualitative and doubly secured data collection make the standard practice
- all existing benchmarks in 21 categories are considered
- an analysis of the situation shows the development
- the presentation of the results are transparent

Conclusion:

- ⇒ it is a balanced consideration of all relevant aspects for biosphere reserves
- ⇒ the functions are subject to a weighted rating
- ⇒ the method is well applicable, comparable, transferable, but extensive

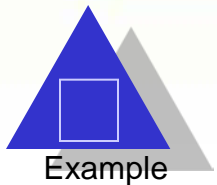
⇒ **the German biosphere reserves fulfil the high quality requirements between 55 to 88%**





BR Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands of Schleswig-Holstein

Year designated 1990 /
extended and renamed 2004

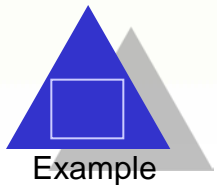


Evaluation of biosphere reserves in Germany



BR Südost-Rügen

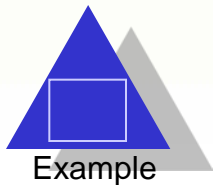
Year designated 1991





BR Schaalsee

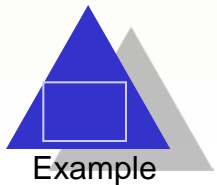
Year designated 2000

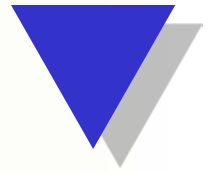




BR Berchtesgaden Alps

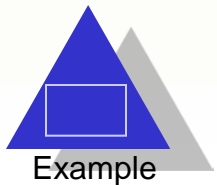
Year designated 1990





BR Flusslandschaft Elbe

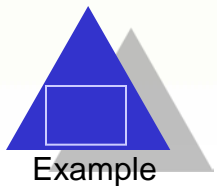
Year designated 1997





BR Schorfheide-Chorin

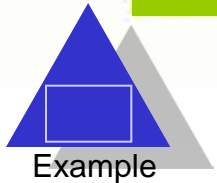
Year designated 1990





BR Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft

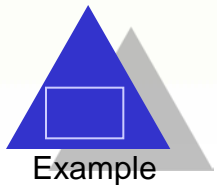
Year designated 1996





BR Wadden Sea of Hamburg

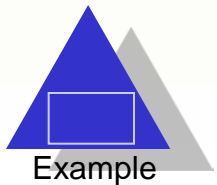
Year designated 1992





BR Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony

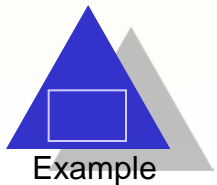
Year designated 1993





BR Spreewald

Year designated 1991

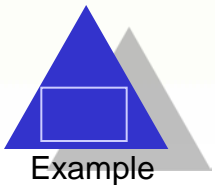


Evaluation of biosphere reserves in Germany



BR Rhön

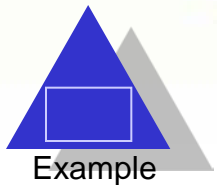
Year designated 1991





BR Pfälzerwald-Vosges du Nord

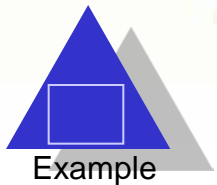
Year designated 1993 /
extended and renamed 1998





BR Vessertal-Thüringen Forest

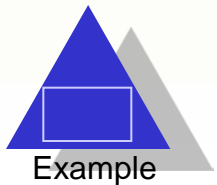
Year designated 1979 / extended 1986 and 1990

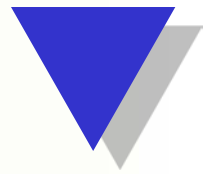




BR Bayerischer Wald

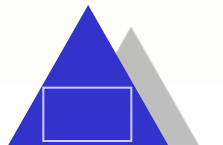
Year designated 1981 / deprived 2008

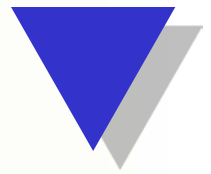




Some final recommendations

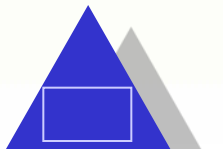
- Biosphere reserves have to get a financial sponsor.
- They need public incentives und political support.
- The MAB-National Committee supports the ministries of the federal states.
- The national criteria of biosphere reserves have to be accepted in every federal state.
- The criteria should be used.
- All exclusion criteria will be accepted from the existing biosphere reserves.
- Less developed biosphere reserves deserve intensive support.
- Image and advertising campaigns are to initiate.
- Good lobbying is necessary.





Some final recommendations

- Urban-industrial biosphere reserves and geoparks will play an important role in future. They have to be considered.
- Aspects of climate change, invasive species and the development of the biodiversity have to be considered in protected areas more than in other areas. They have the function as a model region.
- The administrations have to prepare annual reports. These intermediate controls demonstrate the successes, shortcomings and problems in time.
- The administrations of each biosphere reserve got support by the implementation of the evaluation from the national committee. This was helpful. But: the committee should not stop this support. The protected areas need more assistance.



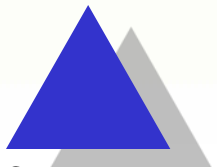


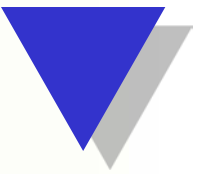
Conclusion

Evaluations of protected areas are implemented at least every ten years!

Evaluations are the evidence for the development,
the progress and the trends!

This leaves the German biosphere reserves put to the test again
... in future ...





Thank you !

